

SENATE BILL 3443
By Jackson

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 68,
Chapter 57, Part 1, relative to surgical
technologists.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 68, Chapter 57, Part 1, is amended by
adding a new section thereto, as follows:

Section 68-57-105. For the purposes of this chapter, "surgical technologist"
means one who works under medical supervision to facilitate the safe and effective
conduct of invasive surgical procedures. This individual is usually employed by a
hospital, medical office, or surgical center, and supervised by a physician during surgical
procedures to ensure that the operating room environment is safe, that equipment
functions appropriately, and that the operative procedure is conducted under conditions
that maximize patient safety by performing certain tasks, including but not limited to:

(1) Preparation of the operating room and the sterile field for surgical
procedures by preparing sterile supplies, instruments, and equipment using
sterile techniques;

(2) Preparation of the operating room for surgical procedures by ensuring
that surgical equipment is functioning properly and safely; and

(3) Passing instruments, equipment, or supplies to a surgeon, sponging
or suctioning an operative site, preparing and cutting suture material, transferring
fluids or drugs, holding retractors, assisting in counting sponges, needles,
supplies, and instruments, and performing other tasks as directed by the
physician during a surgical procedure.

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 68-57-101, is amended by deleting subsection (a) in its entirety and by substituting instead the following:

(a) Individuals employed to be surgical technologists must:

(1) Hold and maintain current national certification established by the Liason Council on Certification for the Surgical Technologist (LCC-ST); and

(2) Have completed a program for surgical technology accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP).

SECTION 3. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 68-57-102, is amended by deleting such section in its entirety and by substituting instead the following:

Section 68-57-102.

(a) In addition to individuals identified in 68-57-101, a person may be employed upon providing sufficient evidence that, prior to the effective date of this act, the person was at any time employed as a surgical technologist for not less than eighteen (18) months in the five years immediately preceding the effective date of this act in a hospital, medical office, surgery center, or school of surgical technology. An individual who has begun training to be a surgical technologist prior to the effective date of this act shall be eligible for employment as a surgical technologist provided that such training is completed within three (3) years of the effective date of this act.

(b) In addition to individuals identified in 68-57-101, a person who has completed an appropriate training program for surgical technologists in the armed forces may be employed as a surgical technologist. For the purposes of this act, "armed forces" means the army, navy, air force, marine corps, coast guard, or public health service of the United States.

(c) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, a surgical technologist in the service of the federal government is exempt from the provisions of this act while performing duties related to such employment.

SECTION 4. This act shall take effect July 1, 2006, the public welfare requiring it.